



...linking our community in Edenbridge

# BRIDGES NEWS

Mary Perrett – Centre Manager  
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Members have a special hiring rate of £10 per hour (includes the use of servery), do consider Bridges when planning a function. The centre can take a maximum of 50 guests, so is perfect for parties, Christenings, family get togethers and much more. Contact Dot on 01732 862408 for more info (or Mary in office hours).

## Diary Dates

Christmas Closure  
Saturday 24th Dec until  
Tuesday 3rd January  
2012 inclusive  
Re-opens on Wednesday  
4th January at 9.30am

BRIDGES Quiz Night  
Saturday 28th January at  
the W.I. hall  
(Book your team now to  
avoid disappointment)

Annual Review  
Saturday 24th March  
10am at BRIDGES

Fairtrade Fortnight  
27 Feb to 11<sup>th</sup> March

Easter Opening  
Good Friday – April 6th  
Centre closed  
Easter Monday – April  
9th  
Centre closed.

*Welcome to our Christmas newsletter where we are already busy planning our Christmas festivities. I am a firm believer that December needs an extra week included in the month to incorporate all the extra events to which we have been invited.*

*This year BRIDGES will be joining with the celebrations in the town on Saturday 3rd December by opening in the afternoon between 2pm-6pm to offer christmas fayre and a very warm welcome.*

*We are also holding our first " CHRISTMAS CAROLS at BRIDGES " which is being held in the centre on Wednesday 14th December between 5pm-6pm followed by coffee and mince pies.*

*YOU are most welcome to join with us. Please book the date in your diary.*

*However you spend your Christmas season, may Peace and Joy fill your heart and home and may the New Year bring health and wholeness to you and your family.*

*The management committee and Trustees join with me in wishing all our visitors and friends a very Happy Christmas and wish you every blessing in 2012. We look forward to welcoming you to BRIDGES in the new year.*

*Love, Mary  
Centre Manager*

## BAUBLE APPEAL

Sarah Wade is the granddaughter of one of BRIDGES' volunteers. This year she studied as part of her degree at the Marich Pass Field studies centre in Kenya. This centre runs a primary school for the local children where Sarah also spent time. It needs two more classrooms so that all the children can finish primary education. Sarah has committed herself to raising funds for this and the charity (Friends from Marich Pass, Ch.Reg. 1081209) will be the subject of this years BAUBLE APPEAL More info. on our December display.

## News on BRIDGES Trustees

There have been a few changes in the trustees in recent months. The present group is: David Stafford(Chair), Sue Oldfield, Ron Sutton, Dorothy Sutton Martin Perrett, Paula Clark, Mike Musgrove (also Secretary). Andrea Shipwright has kindly agreed to act as Minutes Secretary.

At the beginning of the year Sue Oldfield expressed her wish to step down as Chair and David Stafford was elected by the trustees in April to replace her. But the trustees are hugely relieved that Sue has agreed to remain a trustee and to continue to provide her invaluable wisdom, guidance and support to BRIDGES in this way. At the end of September Crispin Jewitt resigned as a trustee having completed the three years he had agreed to serve when he was first appointed.

Crispin has helped BRIDGES in a variety of ways, many of which have been 'behind the scenes'. The most visible fruit of his work has been the new signage at the entrance to the Centre and on the east wall in the High Street. His experience will be greatly missed.

Crispin will however be replaced by Mike Musgrove who has served as Secretary to the trustees for many years and is therefore very familiar with all aspects of BRIDGES. He will now be able to open his mouth at trustee meetings and we will benefit from his thoughts and wise counsel!

## FACE TO FAITH

Meets on a Wednesday lunchtime, from 1pm to 1.45pm, every fortnight, over coffee and sandwiches, where we take time out to reflect on how our faith relates to our work situation and life balance,. This has been a pilot project and discussion needs to be held and comments received from those who have enjoyed this short programme to know whether we should continue with more of the same in the new year.

DAVID OBBARD  
1922 - 2011

David was a Groombridge farmer who became a committed Christian as a young man. A man of faith and prayer, he felt called to the ministry in later life, combining his farming with 21 years as pastor of the Rehoboth Baptist Chapel in Tunbridge Wells. On his retirement he preached at many Strict Baptist chapels, and was passionate that people should understand that Jesus, through His life and teaching, invites everyone to experience the love of God personally. On becoming too frail to live at the farm, David moved in 2009 to Milward House, Tunbridge Wells, and died on 1.10.11.

David was a Trustee of the Ebenezer chapel, Edenbridge, as was George Wells, whose funeral in 1987 was the last service held before the chapel closed, its regular congregation having dwindled to five faithful ladies. George's widow, Eileen, was on the working party for the BRIDGES project, so when, in 1992, the Ebenezer Trustees decided to seek planning permission for the chapel to be turned into a shop and offices, Eileen suggested that it might be helpful to talk to David, as the chapel would provide an excellent site for the BRIDGES Centre.

At first David was hopeful that BRIDGES might share the chapel, so that he could continue his preaching ministry on Sundays, but the working party members knew this would be an impossible arrangement. Eventually David understood BRIDGES' aims, and agreed to talk to his fellow trustees about selling the chapel to this newly formed Christian trust. He negotiated very favourable terms, selling the chapel for £35,000, on a mortgage repayable over four years.

The total cost of refurbishment turned out to be £104,000, but David, who had utmost faith in the Lord's provision for the project quoted Haggai ch.2 v. 8 to us:

'The silver is mine and the gold is mine  
says the Lord of Hosts'

encouraging us to have faith that God would prompt people to give the money required. In the event, the Trust paid off the mortgage in three years, and the chapel was refurbished and ready for its new role of service in the community by 1995.

Interestingly the following verse (Haggai 2 v 9) says:

'The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,' says the LORD of Hosts, and in this place I will give peace.'

Many visitors to BRIDGES do comment on the sense of peace they find here, and David was gratified to see Christian service continuing through the many people who took part in the life of the Centre as volunteers or visitors. He attended several AGMs and occasionally his daughter brought him here for lunch. He left a collection of his poems and his life story here in the hope that readers would see how the natural world had revealed to David as he farmed, the truths Jesus had taught through His life and parables.

## New boiler

They don't seem to last long, do they? Our boiler was installed when BRIDGES was extended in 2003. Over the last two or three years, it became somewhat unreliable, it was difficult to get people with the right knowledge to service it and increasing leaks into the boiler room finally led to advice that it should be replaced. Happily, our local plumber was able to obtain a bargain price for a new boiler of a different make with a 5 year guarantee included, so we should be reliably warm for the winter, and use less gas - just as well given the way prices are increasing. The new boiler has nonetheless cost around £2,500, of which £500 has been donated by the Laura Chapel Trust.



## We have a Website!

[www.bridges.edenkent.org](http://www.bridges.edenkent.org)

That's the address of our website (front page shown left.) Please publicise it and use it.

Thanks to Colin Miller and Andrea Shipwright who have helped create it.

We do need someone with the basic IT skills needed to update it so that we can put on weekly events, update menus and put the newsletter there, anyone interested please contact Mary Perrett.

## Open doors

In response to comments from users of BRIDGES the front doors at the Centre have been replaced to provide one half which is large enough to accommodate buggies and wheelchairs. All or virtually all users should now have to open only one of the doors to get in and out.

We are extremely grateful to Eric Wills (the husband of Marion, member of the Management Committee) who drew up the specifications and carried out the work on very special terms. He had previously worked 'in the business' and effectively gave all his time free of charge. BRIDGES was therefore able to obtain and install the doors at a cost much lower than a commercial operator.

This is a marvellous example of how we can progressively improve the BRIDGES facilities, and the services it offers, through mobilising friends and relations with the required skills or aptitudes. As the Open Forum in March demonstrated there are numerous ideas for new initiatives, but we need people to come forward and help us realise them.

Please do not be shy to discuss your ideas with Mary Perrett at the Centre – but preferably with a proposal as to how we can carry them forward! There is a limit to what we can do with our present group of volunteers, so the doors are always open for people like Eric.

### MORE CAKE PLEASE!..

We have a strong home baking team who bake and deliver the most delicious cakes, muffins, scones, and chocolate fancies. However, we are always in search of new bakers. Even if you do not wish to join our team, it might be that you have a recipe you would be willing to share. Please e-mail recipe details to Mary. [thebridgescentre@btconnect.com](mailto:thebridgescentre@btconnect.com)

### Goodbye, farewell

We are sorry to lose the faithful help of two of our Monday lunchtime volunteers, namely Laurie Williams and Alice Manning. We hope that you will not feel too lonely on a Monday lunchtime without your responsibilities here.

We are also sorry to lose an excellent home baker in Win Watson who sadly died on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November. We shall definitely miss Win's contribution as she was a valued member of our team.



### BRIDGES 2011 SUMMER RAFFLE

Our BRIDGES summer raffle was once again a huge success. A big thank you to all who supported this year's fund raising raffle by selling and buying tickets and to the local traders who donated prizes.

There were 15 prizes in total and BRIDGES raised £1500.00 which was a superb effort. The money raised was put towards a new boiler in the BRIDGES centre.

### FOOD HYGIENE

A half day seminar from our resident EHO, Jane Cain, is being arranged for the new year as we take this subject very seriously indeed.

Our recent visit from Sevenoaks District Council awarded us 4 stars (out of a possible 5) so I hope our visitors can see we strive to keep very high standards.

### Fairtrade in Edenbridge

We are, as I'm sure you are all aware, a Fairtrade Town - and Fairtrade Fortnight is coming up!

The dates are: February 27<sup>th</sup> - March 11<sup>th</sup> 2012.

The main event in Edenbridge is on Saturday March 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10 - 12, when there will be a Fairtrade Fair at Rickard's Hall and Precinct and an Edenbridge Fairtrade Trail, (starting from the Precinct). This will be a great occasion, so do make a note of the date on your calendar! - and look out for more information nearer the time. A reminder too that you can buy fair-trade all year round in Edenbridge, especially from the regular stall at BRIDGES: from 10 am. to 12 (-ish) on the last Thursday of each month (except in December, when BRIDGES is closed for a few days).

Edenbridge Area Traidcraft Group also has a home delivery scheme: fairly traded goods right to your door!

Please contact me if you are interested.

Jean Gibbons (01732 864529)

### Situations Vacant

**Fundraising enthusiast** - someone with new or old money-raising ideas to join a lively team of similar people who support a much needed and much appreciated local charity. Please contact the Manager, BRIDGES, High St, Edenbridge Tel 868186.

**Editor** - The BRIDGES Newsletter has many potential contributors, but needs someone who can spot stories, get people to write them up and collate them into a two - four times a year publication. Ideal job for someone wanting to try their hand at gaining journalistic experience. Help with layout could be available, although someone with basic computer literacy is preferred.

Email: [thebridgescentre@btconnect.com](mailto:thebridgescentre@btconnect.com)  
or call Mary Perrett on 868186.

### Holiday at Home

This project was one of the four areas for development that arose from the open discussion at this year's Annual Review meeting in March.

The idea is to provide holiday treats for those who, for various reasons, cannot go away on holiday - (people alone, handicapped, aged etc). We intend to provide two or three consecutive days in August during which we might make a day trip to Eastbourne (with a fish & chip lunch) and, depending on the gender of our guests, maybe hand massage, craft activities, sing-alongs, demonstrations and crafts. Lunch and afternoon tea would be provided. We'll need a high proportion of helpers to guests, transport, help with the various projects...and more ideas. It would be great if you would be involved, so if you feel excited by this project and would like to help, please speak to Mary.

### Take a seat!

These chairs cost about £35 each and we'd like to buy some for BRIDGES. Do you know somebody who'd like to sponsor one, or would you? If so, tell Mary our Centre Manager. (There'll be tables needed too!)



### **QUIZ NIGHT**

Our now annual Quiz Night will be held on January 28th 2012 at the W.I. Hall. This is our major fund raising event of the year so please support it by forming a team (4 -6 persons) with your shift members or family, friends and neighbours.

Did you know we have a prayer Group on the first Thursday of each month from 3 - 4pm, to pray for all aspects of BRIDGES? We would be delighted to have more people in the group, if you feel this is for you, don't wait to be asked, just join us. Ring Dorothy on 862121 to check the venue as this may change.

### MILK BOTTLE TOPS PROGRESS REPORT

Just a quick update on how we are getting on with the collection of milk bottle tops for the "God's Hands" project. We all know that recycling plastic bottles is a good thing - but quite often the bottle tops cannot be recycled and so are thrown away at the recycling centres.

Milk bottle tops are made of a specific plastic that can be recycled - but only one company (GHS) in the UK specialises in this process. The Eden Church now has a relationship with this company - and they have expressed delight in the volume and quality of the tops we have collected already. As a new partner they expected us to take time to reach the volumes of tops we have achieved.

The plastic tops are granulated and converted into children's toys - or new bottle tops! To ensure this process works smoothly we double check every donation to ensure there is no paper or foil stuck to the tops, and that they are from standard milk bottles - soft drinks and other similar sized tops are often made with a different plastic! If they are rinsed through this helps too.

The milestone goal is half a metric tonne - 500kg. We are storing them in the clear plastic recycling bags used in Edenbridge and each can contain around six to seven kilos of tops - so you can see this will be quite an achievement. To date we have delivered 26 bags of tops - a massive 176kg of tops! We have already collected another 5 full sacks of tops (around 34kg so taking us over 200kg collected so far).

For more information, please go to this website:

<http://edenchurch.edenkent.org/?info/church-news/bottletops>

Again many, many, many thanks to all those who regularly get involved!